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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to formulate objectives pertaining to knowledge, thinking, attitudes, and skills for a methods course for prospective teachers of English in desegregated high schools, to discuss the selection and organization of course content, to illustrate the principle that prospective teachers learn to teach by performing and discovering, to identify techniques in the evaluation of the prospective teacher's ability to apply what has been learned, and to raise questions that are external to the methods course but may affect its components. The first appendix lists morphological differences between standard and Negro nonstandard English; the second provides a lesson plan model, learning activities, and teaching procedures for concept development and word recognition. (Author/VM)

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A METHODS COURSE FOR PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS OF ENGLISH IN DESEGREGATED HIGH SCHOOLS

By M.I. ElLaissi

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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The purpose of this paper is to formulate objectives pertaining to knowledge, thinking, attitudes, and skills for a methods course for prospective teachers of English in desegregated high schools; to discuss the selection and organization of course content; to illustrate the principle that prospective teachers learn to teach by performing and discovering; to identify techniques in the evaluation of the prospective teacher's ability to apply what has been learned; and to raise questions that are external to the methods course but may affect its components.

QUESTIONS EXTERNAL TO THE METHODS COURSE
WHICH MAY AFFECT ITS COMPONENTS

I. What do the prospective teachers know, think, or feel about

A. Changes in social structure, communication, transportation, etc., in the United States?

Changes in cultural, ethnic, racial, economic patterns in the school population?

Youth culture?

B. The nature and functions of language?

The subject of English?

Systems of English grammar?

The language and literature of minority groups?

Literature for young people?

Characteristics of various literary genres?

C. Speech, drama, journalism?

D. What is meaningful to pupils at succeeding stages of growth?

Techniques, possibilities, and limitations of testing and of grouping students?

II. When did college instructors who teach prospective teachers of English teach in public schools? Do they exemplify in their own teaching techniques and materials which are readily transferable to the school classrooms? Do they observe student teachers?

III. How much time is allotted to methods classes?

COURSE COMPONENTS

I. Objectives

A. Terminal Objectives

To supplement the prospective teacher's academic and professional background

To relate his background to the problems of language teaching and learning in desegregated schools

B. Enabling Objectives

1. Knowledge

The prospective teacher knows about:

The role of English in the total school program.

The English curriculum: objectives; selection and organization of the contents and skills of speaking and listening, reading, and writing with one another and with other subjects in the curriculum; selection and organization of learning experiences; evaluation.

The diversity of course offerings in secondary school English departments.

The Curriculum Guide Evaluation Checklist prepared by the Committee To Review Curriculum Guides of the NCTE.

2. Thinking

The prospective teachers arrive at some definition of the nature and functions of language; of the subject of English; of methods and materials suitable to the subject being taught as well as to the learners' stages of development, out-of-school environment, interests, ability levels, previous language training.

3. Attitudes

The prospective teacher will accept the value of and will commit himself to guideline II C in "Guidelines for the Preparation of Teachers of English":

> The teacher of English at any level should consider growth in his profession as a continuing process.

The prospective teacher is willing to compose lessons and teaching-learning units. He derives satisfaction from trying them out.

4. Skills

a. Linguistic skills

The prospective teachers improvise and perform plays.

They have experience with the regular small-group discussion, the reading-group discussion, and small-group cross-commentary on writing.

They write observations and interviews.

b. Social skills

The prospective teachers will be able to communicate meaningfully and informally with school-age individuals and may come away from such experience with some ideas that the observable differences between children of different social classes lie in the development of standard language, motivation to secure as much education as possible, willingness to work for teacher approval or long-term goals, and acceptance of the learning tasks set by the schools with a minimum of rebellion.

c. Teaching skills

The prospective teacher elects to use ideas that he knows and that pertain to the nature of English, the functions of language, content selection, language learning, etc.

He effectively uses the ideas when he adapts or prepares "classroom drama", i.e., lessons or teaching-learning units clear to known readers as well as to himself.

He directs his pupils' learning.

He and the class evaluate what did happen.

He employs diagnostic procedures.

He knows how to create or find, evaluate, and use significant instructional materials from various media.

He uses a variety of procedures to enable each learner to speak and listen; alternate between the dialect of his peers, his home, and his teachers; read; and write to the limit of his capacity.

He asks questions that help learners develop concepts and generalizations, explore feelings, analyze values, apply knowledge.

To collect evidence on the effectiveness of his own teaching as well as to evaluate the performance of his learners, he constructs or selects evaluation instruments that are valid.

II. Selection and Organization of Content

What will the methods course include? Will it include topics which the prospective English teachers feel are important? Will it take into consideration changes in the cultural, ethnic, racial, economic patterns in the school population?

Which aspects will it emphasize? Will it stress what has been slighted in English and education training?

How will it care for individual differences? Will it stress individual work through independent study periods?

How will it assure sequence?

The course work is divided into units. There are units pertaining to knowledge and others pertaining to teaching skills. What comes before what? Why?

Among the units pertaining to teaching skills there are units which may be taught from relatively simple and concrete elements (terms, facts, procedures) to more complex and abstract ideas (concepts, rules, principles, processes) to even more abstruse ideas (theories, models, applications, and analyses). And there are units which can be taught by lectures based on current research and thought in English education, on readings in related books and periodicals, on discussion. Which units may be taught inductively? Why? What is the significance of the point that our preparatory programs are relatively strong in literature and that our student teachers would rather teach literature the way their English instructors have taught them? What comes before what? Why?

III. Selection and Organization of Learning Experiences: An inductive approach to units on teaching writing observations and interviews, standard English, improvisation, concepts and remedial reading, play performing

Rationale for the inductive approach: So that the prospective teachers will have experience with the linguistic skills that have been slighted in our preparatory programs such as improvisation, play performing, small-group discussion, writing observations and interviews. Besides, they will teach the poverty child, who will be able to alternate between the dialect of his peers, his home, his teachers, and his books when he participates in small-group discussion, improvises, performs dramatic scripts, listens to poetry, reads and writes prose in colloquial English as well as when he practices standard English in structured situations.

An Illustration of Learning to Teach by Performing and Discovering Teaching Observation

A. Opener

Why teach reading and writing observation? How? Answers reveal the preconceptions about teaching that the students' own school and college educations have fostered.

Students listen to a taped school conversation. Do they understand what has been said in nonstandard English?

To find out what prospective teachers know, think, or feel about nonstandard English, the instructor may ask them to develop posters addressed to nonstandard speakers in the tape. Their choice of connotative words may reveal their attitudes.

(In general, tasks that require the development of procedures, ideas, or standards are more effectively accomplished by interaction of the whole class. Tasks which require that varied materials be covered by the same procedure can usually be done more economically through parallel study by small groups.)

B. Development*

1. Students read observations in prose and poetry (about comparative English education).

Discussion of observations:

What are the facts?

What are the inferences and value judgements?

*Developmental activities may be repeated.

What clues to the accuracy and validity of these facts stand in the accounts themselves?

What are the attitudes of the writers toward the topic?

How does the use of details reveal and convey a particular attitude toward the topic?

How do their attitudes select facts?

Where do the attitudes of the writers come from? Are they purely individual or influenced by the society in which they live? Or both?

What different words do writers use to name the same phenomenon?

Groups read observation. Discussion. (Video)taped discussion is played (usually twice). Evaluation of performance:

Use of the above questions

Interaction in groups:
students taking turns putting questions to the group,
responding courteously to others' questions,
calling for and giving evidence,
picking up and developing each other's ideas

Leader's role: to improve group functioning--process not content

Students write observations of an incident on a film. Instructor works through examples with the total class to establish group-work procedures: He reproduces observations he thinks are strong and class will say why they like them.
Students return to the film to verify or modify their observations.
Students exchange observations. Instructor consults with groups while observation papers are read and discussed.

To find out what kind of students our school reading and literature curriculum has produced, prospective teachers interview learners and ask the following questions: What do you like to read about? Why? How often do you read? How much use of school and public libraries do you make for personal reading? What do you like to view on television? Why?

The prospective teacher reads minority group literature. He describes his reaction to the work. Did he like it? What parts did he particularly like? What parts did he particularly dislike? Did he like the way it was written? Did he like what it was about?
He writes about the characters or events of the work. Does he think any of the people in the work are particularly good or bad, nice or nasty? Who? Does he feel as if he really knows any of the people in the work?
He describes the degree of his success to identify with the work. Did he identify with any of the characters? Who? Did he ever feel he was part of the work? When? Did he find himself agreeing with any of the thoughts of the author? When?
Each of the above questions in turn should be followed by "Why?" or "Explain."

Using a list of syntactic differences between standard and nonstandard English, the prospective teachers analyze nonstandard English in minority group literature.* They also listen to a tape, record and analyze nonstandard English. What variables between standard and nonstandard English did they find in their reading/observation? They return to the tape so that they may learn to hear accurately what the pupil says and avoid editing it to what they would have liked for the pupil to say. Does the prospective teacher use that variable? In which situation? In casual speech? How often? In careful speech? The variables are written on the blackboard. Items are grouped because they fit into a linguistic class. Students assign a label which refers to a characteristic which can be inferred for all of the items in a group.

Students write observations about verbal interaction in a local newspaper plant, a radio station, a theatre, a telegraph office, in the school cafeteria, on the playground, during the noon hour, while the learners wait for the school bus in the afternoon.
Students read and discuss each other's observations.

2. Students read about teaching observation.

They discuss their reading with the instructor and peers.

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*See Appendix I for a list of morphological differences between standard and Negro nonstandard English.

C. Conclusion

Students give generalizations about the relation of writing and speech and the functions of language.

Students develop (and may present) units for teaching observation to pupils with a particular language training.

(Acquiring the necessary background for developing units involves this learning hierarchy: instructor teaching prospective teachers, students viewing teacher training films or videotapes, or students observing classroom teacher; students reading about teaching; students interviewing; trying out the instructor's lesson; students developing media to demonstrate concepts, writing a lesson for a teaching procedure--oral interpretation, pattern practice, study/discussion questions, etc.--and teaching a small group of peers; students supplementing/modifying a unit.)

Instructor reproduces a unit he thinks is strong. Students discuss it in the light of the objectives, learning activities, and teaching procedures presented on the following page.

Students exchange, read, and analyze each other's units. Instructor reads analysis. Are the students able to analyze in detail the strengths and weaknesses in the units and to communicate the analysis effectively? Students are referred to particular instructional materials or processes intended to help them clear up their difficulties.

The units may be revised and are filed.

A student may inquire further and write a unit model on teaching observation.*

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*See Appendix II for a model on teaching concepts and remedial reading.

A GRAPHIC PRESENTATION OF ENGLISH OBJECTIVES,
LEARNING ACTIVITIES, AND TEACHING PROCEDURES

Objectives	Learning Activities		Teaching Procedures
Knowledge & Perception	Sequence:	Means:	Telling Explaining Comparing and Contras Demonstration Oral interpretation Study/Discussion questions ~~Questions~~ Drill
Descriptive facts	Opener		
Concepts	Diagnosis		
Ideas	Justifying objectives		
Thinking	Hypothesizing		
Developing concepts	Development		
Inferring/ Generalizing	Conclusion	Viewing Listening Student-machine interaction Asking questions Recording Reading Discussion Reporting experience Dramatizing Producing media Writing Practice	
Applying knowledge	Generalizing		
Attitudes	Applying generalizations		
Descriptive learning	Evaluation		
Sensitizing	Further inquiry		
Interest & Appreciation			
Skills			
Social			
Linguistic			
Conversation		Dramatic improvisation	P
Monologuing			O
Reading Analyzing Interpreting fiction actuality		Play performing	E T R
Writing of actuality fiction		Play writing	Y

IV. Evaluation

Progress Tests

Determining at each step in the teaching-learning process whether the process is effective or not

Means: objective questions, essay tests, performance tests, video-/audio-tape recorder techniques, rating scales for performance and products, longitudinal record of evidence of using principles related to the nature and function of language and language learning

Illustrations of evaluation devices that test the prospective teacher's ability to apply what has been learned:

a. DIRECTIONS: Read the objectives and the evaluation of the attached unit. Which of the following come closest to what you think about the test items in this unit? Put a circle around the letter of the choice or choices you have made.

1) The items are good because they are consistent with the objectives of the unit.

2) The items are good because they give learners an opportunity to reveal the behavior that is being evaluated.

3) Items . . . are good because they test a number of behaviors at one time.

4) Multiple choice questions are good because they include plausible incorrect answers.

5) Essay questions of application are good because they enable the learner to bring together much of what he has learned.

6) The items are poor because the results do not represent a sufficient sample of behavior in various situations.

7) The items are poor because most deal with recall of facts.

8) Essay questions are poor because they do not provide explicit instructions along with most of the materials necessary to answer the question.

9) Essay questions of application are poor because they do not ask the learner to apply a specific situation to his knowledge or his knowledge to a specific situation.

10) The items are poor because the results are not sufficiently diagnostic to distinguish various levels of performance or mastery attained.

11) The items are poor because the results do not describe the strengths and weaknesses in the process as well as in the product of the performance.

One would need to repeat this sort of questioning with several units to see whether the student uses one criterion consistently or not.

b. 1) DIRECTIONS: Change the following nonstandard monologue into reported speech.

2) Students read a play translated into English. They decide which character(s) would have spoken nonstandard English and in which situations they would have spoken it. They rewrite the lines using nonstandard English.

3) DIRECTIONS: Look out for and bring in picture captions, cartoon strips, songs, jokes, printed advertising that use (morphological) variables between standard and nonstandard English.

c. Prospective teachers are presented with two groups of questions on an anthology of short stories organized by theme or historical pattern.

DIRECTIONS: These two groups of questions may help a class that has read the anthology develop the following concepts: autobiography, memoir, and biography. Explain which of the two groups of questions is better. Include in your answer

1) the basis on which you make your choice

2) the reason for use of that basis

3) the most complete evidence you can gather to illustrate the basis of your choice of the group of questions.

Prospective teachers may provide the following set of criteria: Questions for developing these concepts should help the learners

1) list the narrative methods of a number of short stories

2) compare and contrast the short stories

3) group them

4) give reasons for so ordering them (the "speaker" tells about himself after the conclusion of events, the "speaker" directly addresses us, etc., can be inferred for all autobiography)

5) label the three groups of short stories.

Student teachers may be organized into groups of three or four and encouraged to discuss and list what should be stressed, omitted, expanded, etc., in the methods course. Each group elects a recorder who, after discussion, reports for the group. The college supervisor lists what each group likes best about the methods course and what could be improved. After the recorders have reported, all student teachers are encouraged to agree, disagree, qualify or amplify the items. Finally, the student teachers' evaluation is reported to the methods instructor.

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Appendix I

The following is a list of morphological differences between standard and Negro nonstandard English. Nonstandard features used by whites are marked with an asterisk.

FEATURE	STANDARD ENGLISH	NEGRO NONSTANDARD
Forms of the Verb		
1. -ed suffix	Yesterday he walked home. I have lived here.	Yesterday he walk__ home I have live_ here.
Irregular verb say	He said it yesterday.	He say it yesterday.
2. In Negro nonstandard English, the pattern for irregular verbs is: do, done, have did; take, taken, have took.		
3. Perfective constructions	I have walked. I've walked. I had walked. I'd walked.	I have walk__. I('ve) walk__. I had walk__. I done walk. I been walk.
4. Third person singular-s	He runs home.	He run_ home.
Auxillary don't	He doesn't go.	He don't go.*
Have	She has a bicycle.	She have a bicycle.
Do	He does silly things. I think he does.	He do silly things. I think he do.
5. Non-tense be	He is here. (Intermittently) He is working. Is he working?	He be here. He be working. Do he be working?
Absence of to be in present tense	He's a man. He's rich. He's running. They're mine.	He__ a man. He__ rich. He__ running. They___ mine.*
Agreement with forms of to be	They were going. You are there. The boys are there.	They was going. You is there. The boys is there.

FEATURE	STANDARD ENGLISH	NEGRO NONSTANDARD
6. Future form	He's going to go. He's gonna go. I'm going to go.	He gonna go.* He gon go. I'ngna go. I'mana go. I'mon go. I'ma go.
	He'll hit you.	He__ hit you.
Forms of the Noun/Pronoun		
1. Plural	I have five cents. eight years old two feet two deer men teeth children	I got five cent_. eight year_ old two foots two deers mens teeths childrens
2. Possessive-s	John's cousin	John__ cousin
3. Pronoun form	This is mine. We have to do it. He knows us. His book Her book Our book Your book Their book These books	This mines. Us got to do it. Him know we. He book Him book She book We book You book They book Them books
Other Word Forms		
Comparative in-er	He is taller than me.	He is more taller than me.*

Appendix II

Lesson Plan Model: Attaining Concepts and Recognizing Words

A pupil is a disabled reader if he cannot read materials using patterns that correspond with the spoken patterns with which he is already familiar, if his difficulties are not symptoms of a dialect difference, and if he indicates that his range of understanding in listening is consistently greater than his range of understanding in reading.

On the basis of daily observations and diagnostic devices, teachers can distinguish legitimate reading problems arising from an incomplete mastery of the sound-symbol relations and reading differences which are the result of dialect interference. And then they should plan--within a total language arts program--special help and practice for small groups and individuals according to their reading needs. As the pupil goes through the program, he should not only be able to deal with new content but he should also acquire an increased capacity to read.

Objectives:

1. Knowledge, Thinking

   The pupil associates vocabulary with known/new concepts (related to everyday events and to the learners' experiences as well as concepts that appear in the reading materials).

   He discovers that words do not have meanings; people have meanings for words. Different people may have different meanings for the same word. (For example, Blacks take terms and re-define them for cultural homogeneity and racial self-assertiveness.) The total meaning of a word for any given person will depend on the body of emotional associations he has with the word.

2. Attitudes, Feelings, Values

   The pupil indulges in curiosity and speculation about words. (The behaviorial manifestations for this internal, long range objective are external indicators that something positive is occurring internally such as: He likes to trace word etymologies and shifts of meaning; he uses words in new and exciting or amusing combinations; he does crossword puzzles; he makes puns and rhymes.)

   He gives himself over to the task of figuring out what printed language is trying to say.

3. Skills

Focusing on affecting his audience, the pupil uses the most appropriate word he can think of to clearly express his message and to break through the listener's/reader's habitual response.

The pupil learns a set of correspondences between written English and his own spoken English. However, the goal of decoding is to read sentences aloud by thought units and with normal intonation patterns.

The pupil approaches reading left to right.

He identifies the discriminating attributes of letters (b-d).

He associates permissible letter combinations with spoken sounds. (See Venezky's "Linguistics and Spelling," Table I, in Linguistics in School Programs.)

He recognizes at sight the most frequently used words as wholes, that is, by their general characteristics or striking features.

He recognizes the following structural spelling patterns and can successfully read words containing them:

1) Final e, Signaling a "Long" Vowel Sound
   mate-mat
   Pete-pet
   bite-bit
   note-not
   cute-cut

2) Double Consonant, Signaling a "Short" Vowel Sound
   latter-later
   petter-Peter
   bitter-biter
   totter-toter
   cutter-cuter

3) Open Syllable, Signaling a "Long" Vowel Sound
   he-hem
   hi-hit
   no-not

He acquires a familiarity with the main patterns of inflection as these are represented in English spelling.

He acquires a familiarity with the main patterns of derivation

sane-sanity
profane-profanity

bomb-bombard
damn-damnable
sign-signal

race-racial

electric-electricity-electrician

(See Wardhaugh's Reading: A Linguistic Perspective, Table III.

He breaks a word form down into units and then pronounces them correctly.

He recognizes known words with a minimum of analysis.

He can utilize punctuation clues in interpreting sentences.

He can use context clues to guess at an unfamiliar word in order to complete his understanding of the phrase or sentence in which it occurs.

Given a phrase or sentence containing a word which he cannot sound out, but which is in his spoken vocabulary, the child can use contextual clues to guess at the identity of the word, and check that guess for a plausible relation to its spelling.

Given a phrase or sentence containing a word which he can sound out, but which is not in his spoken vocabulary, the child can use contextual clues to determine a probable meaning for the word.

Given a phrase or sentence containing a word which he cannot sound out, and which is not in his spoken vocabulary, the child can use contextual clues to determine the probable meaning for the word.

He chooses from the meanings associated with a given word that which is appropriate in the context.

Learning Activities and Teaching Procedures:

1. Opener

   a. Attaining concepts and associating vocabulary with concepts

      Means:

         Verbal clues: synonyms, enumeration, comparison or contrast, clues derived from experience by teacher and class, definition

         Actions and situations

         Pictures

   b. Sounding-out written words

      Using contrastive word patterns, the teacher says a pair of words that will help the pupils to identify differences between the form of the new word and that of another word which they know.

      The pupil imitates while the teacher--dividing the word into the largest elements--prints the contrasting words on the blackboard, one above the other so that their differences will stand out sharply.

      (The phonological system controlled by the poverty child differs from that used by the teacher. See The Study of Nonstandard English by Labov for formal tests which can be administered to yield information on the set of contrasting vowels and consonants used by the learners to distinguish different words, in both perception and production.)

      The pupil sounds out the word parts. He blends.

      Using colors, the pupil writes or types the words on cards. (The cards may be used from time to time in testing the pupil's mastery of word recognition.)

2. Development

   a. The teacher provides for the reintroduction and review of concepts at frequent and functional intervals (in discussion, during questioning).

b. 1) The learners/teacher share interesting news items, bumper slogans, directions, labels, signs, etc., they have read (and written down). They post them on the bulletin board.

2) The learners listen to recorded/live (songs) as they follow the words placing a strip of cardboard under the line to be read.

3) The teacher constructs a variety of exercises designed to fit the needs of his own pupils and related to the kind of information they really want to process.

The learners sort school mail.

They read catalogues and "TV Guide" to find specific information.

3. Conclusion

The learners leaf through magazines for ads.

Teacher: What words/phrases grabbed your attention? What methods have been used to cause the reader to focus attention on selected words/phrases?

The learners give items such as height of words, density, color, substitution of a picture (a ball) for a letter (o) in a word (golf), contrastive word patterns, rhyme, emotional meanings they have for words.

The teacher chooses words to pursue their affective use:

What meanings do you have for this word?
How do you account for them?

The learners give individual experiences.

Teacher: Do X, Y, and Z have the same meanings for any word?

Learners: No.

Teacher: What may be the emotional reactions the readers of this magazine have to this word? To this word?

What does all this tell you about the appeals ad writers use to grab the reader's attention?

If we want to sell such and such an item (made in industrial arts), what ads would we put in the school paper?